From execution to learning: how shifting focus in New Product Development eases Post Merger Integration processes

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Abstract
This paper explores the question how firms manage PMI when new joint projects must be completed long before the PMI process is completed and identifies integration mechanisms and organizational solutions at work when firms have to develop new products while still merging their relative sets of innovation competences and knowledge. By employing a processual view and longitudinal analysis, our results show how Fiat and Chrysler, two major automotive manufacturer, carried out the integration of their highly complex and tacit knowledge during their first co-development project. The project represented the real locus of technological and knowledge integration between the two firms and the organizational and integration solutions identified contribute to the NPD literature by showing how, at the same time, firms’ can support both new projects execution and integration efforts after M&As. JEL classification: O32

Keywords: R&D integration, NPD organization, merger and acquisitions.

The paper is co-authored with Markus C. Becker (University of Southern Denmark) and Francesco Zirpoli (Ca’ Foscari University, Venice)